

IN THE CLAIMS:

The below listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A filtering device for capturing embolic material released into a body vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, comprising:

a guide wire having a proximal end and a distal end and adapted to be inserted within the vasculature of;

an expandable cage assembly having distal and proximal ends, the cage assembly being attached to the distal end of the guide wire and expandable to capture embolic material and collapsible to retain the captured embolic material;

filter material secured to the expandable cage assembly; and

at least one discrete hinge located on the guide wire proximal to the expandable cage assembly and another hinge located distal to the expandable cage assembly to allow the expandable cage assembly to freely articulate on the guide wire.

2. (Original) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:

the guide wire does not pass through the expandable cage assembly and comprises separate sections, one section attached to and extending from the proximal end of the expandable cage assembly and one section attached to and extending from the distal end of the expandable cage assembly.

3. - 4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:

the at least one hinge comprises notches cut along the longitudinal axis of the guide wire such that an area of decreased guide wire diameter is created.

6. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises slots cut in the guide wire, each slot extending
along the longitudinal axis.

7. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises slots cut in the guide wire, each slot extending
perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

8. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises holes cut in the guide wire along the longitudinal
axis.

9. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises a spring connecting separate sections of the guide
wire.

10. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises a portion of material having a different durometer
than the guide wire, the portion of material connecting separate sections of the guide
wire.

11 - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The filtering device of claim 1, further comprising:
stop fittings attached to the guide wire at the proximal and distal ends of the
expandable cage assembly, the stop fittings preventing the expandable cage assembly
from moving proximally or distally along the guide wire.

20. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 19, further comprising:

a third stop fitting attached to the guide wire distal to the proximal end of the expandable cage assembly.

21. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 20, wherein:
the three stop fittings are conical-shaped and provide a smooth transition between the expandable cage assembly and guide wire.

22-25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) A filtering device for capturing embolic material released into a body vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, comprising:

a guide wire having a proximal end and a distal end and adapted to be inserted within the vasculature of a patient;

a filter device associated with the guide wire; and

at least one discrete hinge located on the guide wire to allow the filter device to freely articulate on the guide wire.

27. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge is located distal to the filter device.

28. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge is located proximal to the filter device.

29. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises notches cut along the longitudinal axis of the guide wire such that an area of decreased guide wire diameter is created.

30. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises slots cut in the guide wire, each slot extending
along the longitudinal axis.

31. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises slots cut in the guide wire, each slot extending
perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

32. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 1, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises holes cut in the guide wire along the longitudinal
axis.

33. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises a spring connecting separate sections of the guide
wire.

34. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the at least one hinge comprises a portion of material having a different durometer
than the guide wire, the portion of material connecting separate sections of the guide
wire.

35. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 28, wherein:
a discrete hinge is located distal to the filter device.

36. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 26, wherein:
the filter device is self-expanding.

37. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 36, wherein:
the expandable filter includes an expandable cage made from a material having
self-expanding properties.

38. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 36, further including:
an obturator attached to the filter device which forms a hinge allowing the
obturator to freely articulate on the guide wire.

39. (Previously Presented) The filtering device of claim 36, wherein:
the discrete hinge is made from a reduced area of mass along the guide wire.